

Message Text

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 01 HELSIN 00630 021004Z
ACTION CU-06

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TO USIA WASHDC
INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 2437
AMEMBASSY OSLO

UNCLAS HELSINKI 0630

USIAC

STATE FOR CU/WE, P. SAPP

EO 11652: N/A
TAGS:
SUBJECT: VOLSPKR WILL ANTELL

REF: STATE 020472

1. ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION FOR THE STATE OF MINNESOTA WILL ANTELL, WHO IS A CHIPPEWA INDIAN AND MEMBER OF PRESIDENT'S COUNCIL ON INDIAN EDUCATION, SPENT ONE AND A HALF DAYS IN FINLAND (FEBRUARY 27-28) AND PROVED TO BE A FIRST CLASS SPEAKER WHO WAS HIGHLY INFORMED ON THE PROGRESS OF AMERICAN INDIANS AND OTHER INDIGENOUS PEOPLES IN ALL AREAS OF THE U.S. INCLUDING ALASKA WHICH HE HAS VISITED SEVERAL TIMES. AS THE COMMISSIONER RESPONSIBLE FOR HANDICAPPED EDUCATION IN THE STATE OF MINNESOTA, HE ALSO WAS ABLE TO GIVE A VERY THOROUGH PRESENTATION OF DEVELOPMENTS IN THE U.S. IN EVERY FIELD OF HANDICAPPED EDUCATION.

2. ALTHOUGH HIS PROGRAM WAS NOT AS COMPREHENSIVE AS WE WOULD HAVE LIKED DUE TO THE UNAVAILABILITY OF ALL OF THE TOP OFFICIALS IN THE NATIONAL BOARD OF SCHOOLS
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BECAUSE OF MID-WINTER VACATIONS, HE DID HAVE A VERY SUCCESSFUL HALF DAY AT THE LEADING SCHOOL IN HELSINKI FOR HANDICAPPED CHILDREN WHERE HE TOURED EDUCATIONAL AND VOCATIONAL FACILITIES AND THEN LECTURED ON "HANDICAPPED EDUCATION IN THE UNITED STATES" TO AN EXPERT GROUP OF FACULTY MEMBERS AND INVITED GUESTS. FOLLOWING THIS PROGRAM HE SPENT TWO HOURS AT THE

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION DISCUSSING POLICIES AND ISSUES CONCERNING THE LAPPISH POPULATION OF FINLAND WITH THE CHIEF OF THE INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT AND THE MINISTRY'S TOP EXPERT ON LAPPISH DEVELOPMENT. THIS PROVED TO BE A VERY USEFUL DIALOGUE AND REVEALED THAT MANY OF THE CULTURAL AND EDUCATIONAL ISSUES INVOLVING LAPPS AND THE MAJORITY CULTURES IN NORDIC COUNTRIES HAVE PARALLELS IN THE U.S. IN A NUMBER OF AREAS IT WAS CLEAR THAT U.S. INDIANS ARE IN A MUCH STRONGER POSITION LEGALLY TO PROTECT THEIR INTERESTS THAN ARE THE LAPPS.

3. BASED ON OUR BRIEF EXPERIENCE, WE HIGHLY RECOMMEND ASST. COMMISSIONER ANTELL TO OTHER POSTS AND FEEL THAT HE COULD BE PROGRAMMED VERY USEFULLY NOT ONLY WITH EDUCATIONAL OFFICIALS, BUT ALSO WITH POLITICAL AND MEDIA LEADERS WHO ARE INTERESTED OR CONCERNED WITH THE PROBLEMS AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE AMERICAN INDIANS IN THE U.S.

QP-VG, ED-; &, AR-VG, RO-VG.

VOTH

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